

**Suggested Talking Points for Mr. Raymond Edler, ORP
Partial Hand-Over of Permanent Shelters
Barangay Sta. Eulalia, Baao, Camarines Sur
May 20, 2008; 10:45 a.m.**

Baao Mayor Quirino Boncayao;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Marhay na Aga (Good morning)!

- This is my first time in the Bicol Region - it is really a great pleasure to be here.
- I am honored to take part in this hand-over of the newly-built houses for families displaced by the flooding in this barangay that was caused by super Typhoon Reming in late 2006.
- We are doing a partial turn-over of the houses because the U.S. Government understands the challenging conditions that the beneficiaries are experiencing in your makeshift shelters with the heavy and frequent rains that the region is now getting. The remaining beneficiaries will occupy their completed houses as their units are finished.
- This event is an important milestone for the first 45 families who will be occupying the new houses. You've been in limbo for a long time and we hope you can now start your lives anew.
- I work for the United States Government, specifically for the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID. USAID is the principal agency of the U.S. Government

that administers U.S. foreign assistance, including disaster relief.

- I am here today on behalf of the U.S. Government and the American people who have supported the relief efforts here in the Bicol Region. On their behalf, I want to convey my deepest sympathy to those of you who suffered the loss of loved ones, homes, and livelihoods.
- The United States joined many nations around the world offering support to the survivors of super Typhoon Reming disaster. Through USAID, we quickly provided cash and in-kind assistance to the victims of floods and mudslides.
- On May 25, 2007, President Bush signed an appropriations law, which includes \$5 million specifically for typhoon recovery assistance for the Philippines. The request for funds was authored by Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii, a long-time friend of the Philippines.
- The \$5 million is supporting a number of integrated interventions to help families in the provinces of Albay and Camarines Sur through USAID grants to Save the Children and International Organization for Migration (or IOM).
- Here in Sta. Eulalia, IOM will construct a total of 85 houses. To date, IOM has completed the construction of 45 new homes, which will be handed-over today.
- I understand that through the Save the Children grant, 211 families in this municipality, including those who will be awarded the first 45 houses today, have earlier received basic

household items [such as thermoses, rice pots, frying pans, mosquito nets, blankets, plastic mats, flashlights, water containers and hygiene kits]. Furthermore, Save the Children will provide training and inputs for small scale fishing and rice farming activities. It will also conduct capacity building on disaster preparedness.

- I want to congratulate everyone here today on helping to make this new beginning possible, and I applaud your resilience and courage.
- I want to emphasize how much we appreciate the partnership of the Provincial and Local Governments, headed by Gov. Villafuerte, who are very committed to making a better life for all Bicolanos. Our deep appreciation also extends to the staff of IOM and Save the Children; and of course the people of Baao.
- On behalf of USAID and the American People, I congratulate you on the success of this very special project. This effort will surely make the province a safer and more secure place to live and work. And I would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the community for your warm welcome today.
- Let me wish the best for each of you.

Dios mabalos (Thank you).

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OD:EWashington (in draft)
PAS:KSchinerer (info)

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